

Monsignor keeps eye on present, but with a historian's perspective

Sat 12 July 1986

By David Moneypenny
Deseret News staff writer

Few places exist where you will find books such as "The Philosophy of Plato," "The Book of Mormon" and "The Catholic Colonization of the Western Frontier" mixed in with video tapes and photographic equipment. Though unique, the mix is an interesting one and could in some ways be considered the makings of Monsignor Jerome Stoffel.

Monsignor Stoffel's office is packed full of history and is the personification of his office. The office tells his story — the story of a man who has served as a Catholic priest in Utah for more than 50 years.

"My experience in Utah is unique in the sense of being a minority group, but it's not unique in its uniqueness," he said, grinning as he explains that he is not the only person to have his experience.

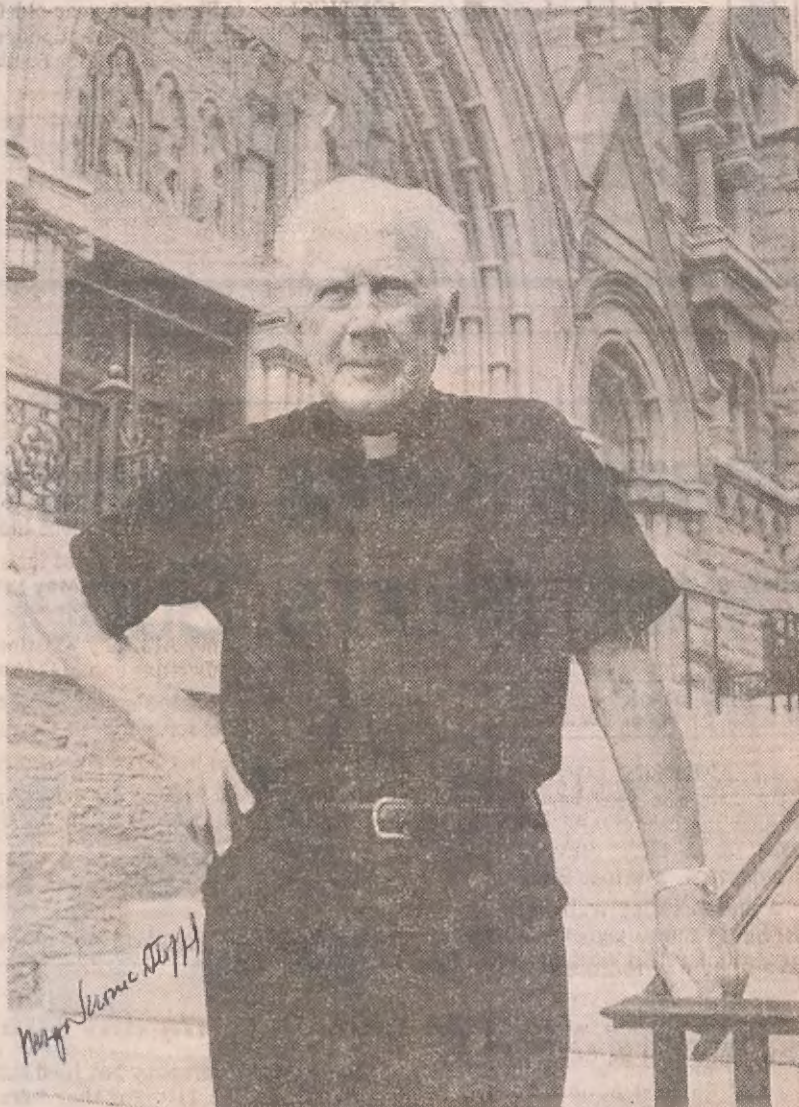
Monsignor Stoffel, the archivist for the Diocese of Salt Lake City, looks at life through a historian's perspective, but he keeps an eye on the present and the future.

"As the years go on, people more and more are looking to the past, the good old days, but many times those old ideas and the old way of doing things don't speak to a generation of people who have to deal with a modern society," he said.

But on the other hand, "We need our past. We have to learn from that past. Faith has to be passed on from generation to generation. We have to be able to discard the non-essential elements of history and apply the important principles from the past that apply today. It's like going from the horse and buggy to the car. It may be fun to ride in a horse and buggy once in a while, but riding in a car is more practical today."

Monsignor Stoffel can adequately discuss the effects of modern life on people because he watched it develop. He can compare the development of ballbearings during and after World War II to the development of video technology in the world today. That is his perspective on life.

"The career concept is getting all messed up today. Thirty years ago, a young man could move into an area and begin a career and count on being



PHOTOGRAPHY/ PAUL BARKER

Monsignor Jerome Stoffel has been a priest in Utah 50 years.

in that area with that job for the rest of his life. Now, that certainty doesn't exist. he could come to work one day and be replaced by some technological advancement. It began slowly just after World War II and has steadily gotten worse. People don't have any security today."

Many of those attitudes and insecurities are even finding their way into the priesthood, Monsignor Stoffel said.

"Fewer men are looking at lifetime careers these days. Entering the priesthood is a lifetime commitment. It's not just for one or two years and

many men today can't see planning their careers beyond two years. Also, being a priest today is very difficult. He has to be so many things to so many people and there is not much time for him to have one to one relationships with people."

Monsignor Stoffel retired from the active ministry in 1981, but still is active in a fill-in capacity along with his duties as the archivist. He began his service in Price in 1937 when the mining camps were starting to close down.

In 1941, he moved to Salt Lake City and worked in several of the local parishes until 1944 when he volunteered to become a chaplain in the Army. He served in post-war Germany and Italy until 1946 when he returned to Utah to serve as the pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Logan. He was pastor of that parish for 30 years. In 1960 when the church was built in Logan, the chapel was christened St. Jerome's, after his namesake.

Monsignor Stoffel returned to Salt Lake City in 1977 to become the director of the ministry to priests program. He presently serves as vicar for retired priests, chaplain at the Carmelite Monastery in Holladay, and chaplain for various other groups in the diocese.

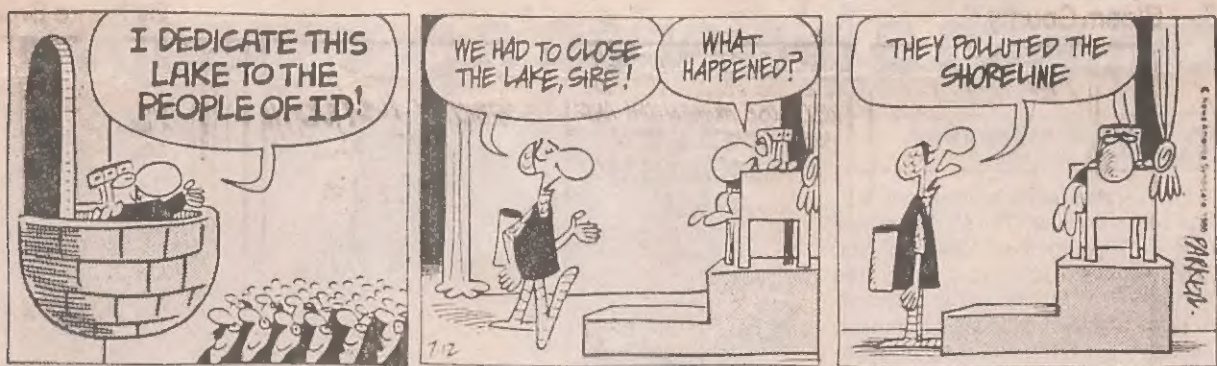
Measure would impose criminal penalties for using force or threats to obstruct religion

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives that would impose federal criminal penalties against those who damage religious properties or those who obstruct by force or threats the free exercise of religion.

Rep. Dan Glickman, D-Kan., who introduced the bill on behalf of himself and 31 co-sponsors representing

diverse political and religious interests, said:

"In spite of our nation's willingness to accept and embrace various religions and forms of worship, there remains a minority within our population who see fit to vandalize and destroy religious property and . . . to jeopardize the freedoms of others to safely practice their religious beliefs."



Joanna Kerns influenced by television 'Supermom'

By Jerry Buck
AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Joanna Kerns says she sees her role as a working mother in ABC's "Growing Pains" as a 1980s version of the 1950s Cleaver of "Leave It to Beaver."

"Although," Miss Kerns hastily added, "I don't think June ever walked in a protest march in Washington, a la Maggie Seaver on our show."

Miss Kerns said she grew up much influenced by characters like Beaver's mom on television in the 1950s and early 1960s.

"I think the influence of 1950s television is that it made us all want to be 'Supermom,'" she said. "I was working here and there on commercials when I had my daughter. Then I was on the series 'The Four Seasons.' It was a very difficult schedule, being mother, wife and actress. I think those programs made you feel that you had to do it all."

"I think our program shows that you don't have to be all things. One of the things we're going to deal with is the guilt a mother feels when she goes to work. Every mother feels if she's not home cooking the pot roast she's not doing enough. That's not true. For years men's work took them away from home and they missed things in their children's lives and guilt was never mentioned."

Miss Kerns stars in the popular domestic comedy with Alan Thicke. The show made its debut last fall and promptly became one of the few reliable audience pleasers on the third-place network.

She grew up in Northern California in a sports-minded family — she was a gymnast — but says there was a lot of tension involved.

Her father was an all-conference football player at the University of California at Berkeley. Her older sister is Donna de Varona, who won two gold medals in swimming at the 1964

Olympics and is an ABC sportscaster. Her younger brother, Kurt, is a professional golfer.

"Donna was getting a lot of attention at that time," she said. "I was such a rebel. You can have siblings who at the core are very similar, but are different in their trappings. Donna didn't wear makeup. I looked like Twiggy with all the makeup. Whatever Donna did, I didn't do. Whatever she didn't do, I did."

"Dad was very supportive of us both, but whenever he came to the gym to watch me work out we got into arguments. I told Donna she was lucky, she was under water. I wrote a screenplay about my relationship with my father. My friends called it 'I Never Swam for My Father.'"

"Donna got so much attention, outside the family as well. She would fly to Japan to swim for the emperor."

What it made me do was strive very hard to be successful. It gave me the kick I needed. I don't think I would have moved to New York and endured the cattle calls for roles. I think the sports background helped me survive. It taught me that you can fail."

She participated in the Olympic trials for 1968 but did not make the top 10 who went to the gymnasts' training camp.

A tall, willowy blonde, Miss Kerns enrolled as a dance major at UCLA, but left in 1970 when she auditioned for Gene Kelly's West Coast production of "Clown Around." In 1971 she joined Joseph Papp's national road company of "Two Gentlemen of Verona."

She made the transition to acting when she moved to New York and studied with Lee Strasberg. Burgess Meredith gave her her first break as an actress when he cast her in a production of "Ulysses in Nighttown" with Zero Mostel and Tommy Lee Jones.

"I was doing a lot of commercials then, too," she said. "I was into irregularity, indigestion and static cling. When I did 'The Four Seasons' I had about 20 commercials on the air and no one was aware of it. I guess I was also the June Cleaver of commercials. I did a commercial for cough syrup that was right out of the 1950s."

She met her husband, Richard Kerns, a commercials producer, while doing a spot for "My Fair Lady." They are now divorcing.

"It was much easier auditioning after I became a Kerns," she said. "With a name like de Varona people used to expect this dark, Latin woman. I used to dye my hair darker because I didn't like the association with dumb blonde. 'Now I'm old enough that I can't be considered a dumb blonde. Producers never knew what to do with me. I'm too strong to play dumb blondes,' she said. "I'm not docile and I'm not led around easily."

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